
Re: Joint Meeting with the Select Board

From Brad Kadelski <bkadelski@brookfieldma.us>

Date Fri 2/7/2025 7:19 AM

To Maureen Lepak <mlepak@brookfieldma.us>; Brookfield Board of Health <boardofhealth@brookfieldma.us>

Cc Town Administrator <townadministrator@brookfieldma.us>; Board of Selectmen <selectmen@brookfieldma.us>

Thank you, I'm discussing this Ron about getting it onto a Select Board agenda.

Brad



Bradford J. Kadelski

Select Board Member, Chair

Town of Brookfield

Brookfield, MA 01506

Mobile: (508) 868-6765

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From: Maureen Lepak <mlepak@brookfieldma.us>

Date: Wednesday, February 5, 2025 at 16:14

To: Brad Kadelski <bkadelski@brookfieldma.us>, Brookfield Board of Health <boardofhealth@brookfieldma.us>

Cc: Town Administrator <townadministrator@brookfieldma.us>, Board of Selectmen <selectmen@brookfieldma.us>

Subject: Re: Joint Meeting with the Select Board

The task force is the objective for SB to create for this purpose. It is unwise to not set one up.

Maureen Lepak, Chair

Brookfield Board of Health



From: Brad Kadelski <bkadelski@brookfieldma.us>

Sent: Wednesday, February 5, 2025 9:50 AM

To: Maureen Lepak <mlepak@brookfieldma.us>; Brookfield Board of Health <boardofhealth@brookfieldma.us>

Cc: Town Administrator <townadministrator@brookfieldma.us>; Board of Selectmen <selectmen@brookfieldma.us>

Subject: Re: Joint Meeting with the Select Board

Hi Maureen,

That's fine, and I have no issue with you not supporting it. At this point, I don't have enough information to take a stance against it either, but depending on the costs, I may find myself in the same position.

In terms of feasibility, I believe the analysis will provide valuable insight into the costs and help residents make an informed decision. I understand that there have been technological advances in individual septic designs, but the same can be said for municipal sewer systems.

I'll look into obtaining the updated Master Plan. I need to check with Kevin at the Planning Board to see if everything is finalized with the draft, as my understanding is that it must be approved and accepted by both the Planning Board and the Select Board.

I'm not opposed to the task force idea, but honestly, it wasn't on my radar, and North Brookfield had already made their request. If things don't move forward, a task force could certainly be created, but if they do, we'll need to establish a committee—unless this falls under the Capital Improvement Committee. I think we may be getting ahead of ourselves at this point. These are all great ideas, and perhaps we should add this to the agenda for discussion.

Regarding your last point, I believe you're referring to the Finney property, which I've been working on to secure funding. I personally agree that we should take action, but as you mentioned, it has been a "hot potato." This was also a topic of discussion with Anne Gobi.

I'd be happy to sit down and discuss these issues with you and Ron, but it may have to wait until next week.

Brad



Bradford J. Kadelski

Select Board Member, Chair
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From: Maureen Lepak <mlepak@brookfieldma.us>
Date: Tuesday, February 4, 2025 at 09:18
To: Brad Kadelski <bkadelski@brookfieldma.us>, Brookfield Board of Health <boardofhealth@brookfieldma.us>
Cc: Town Administrator <townadministrator@brookfieldma.us>, Board of Selectmen <selectmen@brookfieldma.us>
Subject: Re: Joint Meeting with the Select Board

Brad,

I am not suggesting a unilateral decision. I am not against the Select Board moving forward with seeking a grant to conduct feasibility. I'm just telling you the main reasons why I personally don't support tying into North Brookfield's sewer system, and that I am not going to take the lead for you. Again, you are free to reach out to the other board members.

I think another feasibility is unnecessary and will not provide any new insight into this issue, as we are already aware that new technologies now exist, we do not have any difficulties in residents being able to comply with state requirements, we know about the pollution issues caused by sewer, and we know that the cost still imposes a heavy financial burden on landowners.

I am not aware of an updated master plan, so if you have a copy of that I would like to see it. That said, I don't recall where there was ever any directive in the MP to "add sewer services". I was under the impression that there was an objective for SB to create a task force for town sewer and water infrastructure. Was this done? In my opinion, this would be the appropriate group to take on the work of exploring the feasibility of improving Brookfield's infrastructure, which includes sewer, but also things like water and drainage etc. Has the SB discussed the topic of creating a task force to look at all infrastructure?

There are a lot of goals and objectives presented in the master plan (2011) that have not yet been implemented or even explored, so the fact that sewer may be mentioned in the master plan as one of many objectives- doesn't necessarily translate to- in my opinion- spend millions to help North Brookfield's taxpayers.

Specifically it states:

The high costs of constructing sewers lines and a treatment plant make it unlikely the Town will ever develop a municipal sewer system.
Landowners will continue to build new homes where soils comply with state requirements to properly treat domestic effluent. Absent innovations in septic technology that would permit housing on land that cannot pass today's tests, Brookfield will remain a predominantly rural town.

We are not absent of those innovations in 2025. It goes on:

If health considerations in the Town Center dictate the need to build a small treatment plant, sewers would primarily benefit the existing land uses that have problematic septic systems. Alternatively, it may be possible to extend a sewer line from an adjacent municipality to the Town Center, but the cost would impose heavy financial burdens on landowners who would benefit.

We are not experiencing health considerations in this area that would dictate a new to build a small treatment plant. It goes on:

Such an action would have the effect of spurring growth along the new sewer main and would have the potential to open up portions of the Town to large-scale commercial or industrial development.

I understand that you are very interested in business opportunities in town. However, the MP states that "the town has prioritized maintaining the village character". It indicates that a lack of sewer hinders commercial development but also warns that if the Village area was developed that it would change the district dramatically in terms of its character. It states:

Therefore, the Master Plan calls for reliance upon existing septic system technologies for sewage disposal for the foreseeable future. This will result in continuation of current land use patterns and limited development potential.

Any resident that wants to discuss available options for their septic system is always free to contact the board or a title V engineer. The following link is also very helpful. <https://www.mass.gov/septic-systems-title-5>

I would be interested in understanding why you are interested in pursuing "sewer" over other objectives within the master plan, such as senior and affordable housing and why you think there may be benefits to Brookfield residents that rank higher than its cost and environmental impact. I say this because I can think of at least one property near the town center that sits vacant, has had a tax taking, but the town is reluctant to take title because of known environmental issues. So, it sits, polluting the area, right near our elementary school. I've reached out to the DEP about this, so I know they are aware, but it seems that it's a hot potato because of "cost". Seems odd to me that we would entertain the costs of a project that is unnecessary as opposed to the cost to perform an environmental cleanup of an area within the heart of our town. Let me know when you want to have a meeting to discuss that issue as I would be more than happy to work with our state agencies on how to address it.

Maureen Lepak, Chair



From: Brad Kadelski <bkadelski@brookfieldma.us>
Sent: Tuesday, February 4, 2025 7:37 AM
To: Maureen Lepak <mlepak@brookfieldma.us>; Brookfield Board of Health <boardofhealth@brookfieldma.us>
Cc: Town Administrator <townadministrator@brookfieldma.us>; Board of Selectmen <selectmen@brookfieldma.us>
Subject: Re: Joint Meeting with the Select Board

Hi Maureen,

Thank you for clarifying your position.

I will pencil in March 6th for now and will speak with Ron about your comments today. From there, we can determine whether to bring this back to the Select Board or explore how to address the budget considerations.

Regarding the meeting with Ms. Gobi, I had spoken with Ron and was under the impression that he had communicated with you about it. I apologize if there was any breakdown in communication.

I appreciate the information you shared regarding sewer technology. If there is data that supports the case for not tying into a municipal sewer system, I believe it should be presented to residents as part of the broader discussion. However, I don't feel it's our role to make this decision unilaterally—this is ultimately a decision for the residents, and they should have the opportunity to review all relevant information.

Adding municipal sewer services was included in the 2011 Master Plan and, to my understanding, has carried over into the updated Master Plan. I believe this topic was included based on prior community input meetings, rather than being arbitrarily added.

At this point, no vote is taking place on this issue—we are simply working to present information to the residents so they can make an informed decision.

Brad



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From: Maureen Lepak <mlepak@brookfieldma.us>
Date: Monday, February 3, 2025 at 20:28
To: Brad Kadelski <bkadelski@brookfieldma.us>, Brookfield Board of Health <boardofhealth@brookfieldma.us>
Cc: Town Administrator <townadministrator@brookfieldma.us>, Board of Selectmen <selectmen@brookfieldma.us>
Subject: Re: Joint Meeting with the Select Board

Brad,

Just to make sure we are both clear, last week you asked me to make sure that the 2/26 BOH meeting only ran for an hour because you scheduled a Communication Committee meeting at 7pm. This presents a challenge for us to maintain that time frame so I was telling you that 2/26 was NOT a good date for this discussion and that we would confirm availability for the March date by 2/26.

I was not included in your meeting with Ms. Gobi, however, I did bring up this topic at our last meeting and the board was fine with supporting the Select Board in conducting a feasibility study so long as it received grant funds to do so. The Board of Health has no budget available for this work, nor does it have the bandwidth to take the lead in gathering community input at this time. This was not initiated by the BOH.

As I have previously stated, I can find no rationale for pursuit given that there are no issues in town with residents not being able to replace existing systems. Newer [technology](#) is more cost effective than sewer tie-in, as well as more [environmentally friendly](#). Also [here](#). All of this was stated in your meeting in October of 2024.

As you stated, this is a request from North Brookfield, not Brookfield. It did not come from their Board of Health; it's based solely on their hope to get other towns to offset their costs. It's my personal opinion that residents of Brookfield need not pay for North Brookfield's poor financial decisions, especially when there are no issues within town to justify the long-term impact it would have on all our residents -not just those along route 9. Our waterways have already experienced pollution issues from Spencer's treatment facility. I personally cannot support it. If you want to pursue a community input meeting, then feel free to do so, but I am not going to lead that effort for you. If you want to ask the other board members if they want to lead it, feel free to ask them.

The report you provided from 20 years ago- albeit a draft, makes the argument quite clear that the support then was very minimal. I cannot imagine that it would increase given all I have stated above.

I understand that you are not a taxpayer of Brookfield but are a taxpayer of North Brookfield. I suggest that you reach out to the State Ethics Commission to discuss whether this presents a potential conflict of interest for you.

Maureen Lepak, Chair

Brookfield Board of Health



From: Brad Kadelski <bkadelski@brookfieldma.us>
Sent: Monday, February 3, 2025 4:21 PM
To: Maureen Lepak <mlepak@brookfieldma.us>; Brookfield Board of Health <boardofhealth@brookfieldma.us>
Cc: Town Administrator <townadministrator@brookfieldma.us>; Board of Selectmen <selectmen@brookfieldma.us>
Subject: Re: Joint Meeting with the Select Board

Hi Maureen,

The Board of Health should take the lead in gathering community input on this topic from a high level. That's why I'm suggesting a joint meeting—to brainstorm how best to approach this, what questions to ask, and to determine a date for engagement.

The key question from North Brookfield is whether Brookfield wants to tie in. We need to assess the community's needs, estimate the costs, and then present the information to residents so they can make an informed decision. That's assuming we can get a grant for feasibility costs. Otherwise, if we can't, we still need to gauge the resident interest to put it out to the residents if they want to use free cash to fund the feasibility study. If no one in town is interested it gives us the ability to report back to North Brookfield.

I'd be happy to review any materials you have on this topic.

I will pencil it in for Feb. 26th agenda.

Thank you!



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From: Maureen Lepak <mlepak@brookfieldma.us>
Date: Monday, February 3, 2025 at 15:40
To: Brad Kadelski <bkadelski@brookfieldma.us>, Brookfield Board of Health <boardofhealth@brookfieldma.us>
Cc: Town Administrator <townadministrator@brookfieldma.us>, Board of Selectmen <selectmen@brookfieldma.us>
Subject: Re: Joint Meeting with the Select Board

It's not clear to me what your ask is for the Board of Health.

I cannot do the 20th. Our meeting on Wednesday the 26th is going to be limited in time so not sure if you are looking to hold a meeting for community input as the joint meeting or a meeting to discuss the grant. I would recommend that you pencil in March 6th and we will work on determining if we are available by the 26th.

In the meantime, I would ask that you read up on the issue, particularly from an environmental perspective, ahead of that meeting since septic systems are in general deemed more environmentally friendly than a tie-in to sewer.

Maureen Lepak, Chair

Brookfield Board of Health



From: Brad Kadelski <bkadelski@brookfieldma.us>
Sent: Friday, January 31, 2025 10:26 AM
To: Maureen Lepak <mlepak@brookfieldma.us>; Brookfield Board of Health <boardofhealth@brookfieldma.us>
Cc: Town Administrator <townadministrator@brookfieldma.us>; Board of Selectmen <selectmen@brookfieldma.us>
Subject: Joint Meeting with the Select Board

Hi Maureen,

I am looking to see if we can do another joint meeting either Thursday, February 20th, or March 6th. Unless, you want me to see if our Board wants to do it on Thursday, February 26th when you have your regular meeting, but I didn't want to take up your board's time.

Ron is working on submitting an expression of interest with the Community One Stop Grant to get a grant to cover the Feasibility Study. However, a community input meeting would need to be done whether we get it or not. The purpose of this meeting would be to discuss a community input meeting.

I had a discussion with Ron about this. North Brookfield came to us on July 11th to see if Brookfield would like to enter into an agreement with North Brookfield for Sewer. The way I look at it, it's not our decision to whether we enter into this agreement or not. It's our responsibility to put the topic to the residents to see if they would like to enter into this agreement.

If we don't get the grant to fund the feasibility study, it's our responsibility to inform the residents of the cost of a feasibility, and assess the public interest to see if they would want to appropriate funds at the annual town meeting from Free Cash to fund the cost of a feasibility study.

Let me know if you have any questions!

Thank you!

Brad



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